

Recent New Issues from Israel

The Israel Philatelic Agency has announced the addition of a number of new issues available to collectors through the website of the Inter-Governmental Corporation of New York.

• Among the September issues, we find a new addition to the Ethnic Festivals series, in this case, focusing on the Sehrane Festival, which stems from the Jewish community in Kurdistan, where it was celebrated annually in the springtime, on the day after the last day of Passover. It is a celebration of renewal and joy meant to bring the Jewish community together and typically included joint festive meals held outdoors, singing contests and music played on instruments such as the daula (a large drum with skins stretched over both ends of a wooden cylinder) and the zorana (a traditional wooden wind instrument), both shown on the stamp.

• Also released this September is a stamp to promote the battle against breast cancer. The most common type of cancer among women, fighting the disease takes place on many fronts, including raising awareness of early diagnosis—including through stamps such as these—and the steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of developing the disease.

• Another September set features Autumn Flowers. Left to right they are:

Muscaria parviflora: White flowers that are rare among the species that grow in the desert sands. The Muscaria actually blooms slightly earlier than September, just after the first rains in Spring, when its leaves sprout. The Muscaria can develop seeds without pollination and is a readily available source of food for animals..

Sternbergia clusiana: The poet Lea Zehavi called this species “an astonishing yellow flower”. It can be pollinated by different insects. Bees that land on its smooth perianth slide inside and swallow the nectar that is secreted at the bottom of the flower. On their way out they climb onto the stamens, collect the pollen and sometimes also touch the stigma and pollinate it as well.

The *Pancratium sickenbergeri* has white blossoms and a weak scent that is relatively unpleasant in comparison to the similar sea daffodil. It attracts both nocturnal and diurnal insects. The plant has narrow curly leaves that appear only after it blooms, so it is a harbinger of the rains.

• Israel has been very active in the release of joint issues with many nations and postal administrations. Following on other such issues with the Vatican, this new issue celebrates the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the State of Israel and the Vatican. As with the previous such issues, the new souvenir sheet recognizes the long way the two religions have travelled together along a path of reconciliation and friendship. The design combines political and spiritual elements, picturing the synagogue at Capernaum, an important site for members of both religions.

• Finally, one other issue worth noting is Israel’s participation in the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Apollo XI Moon Landing.

For details on these Israel issues as well as many other issues from their many client nations, go to www.igpc.com, the IGPC website, or the IGPC Postal Administrations section on our website, www.stampnewssnow.com.

